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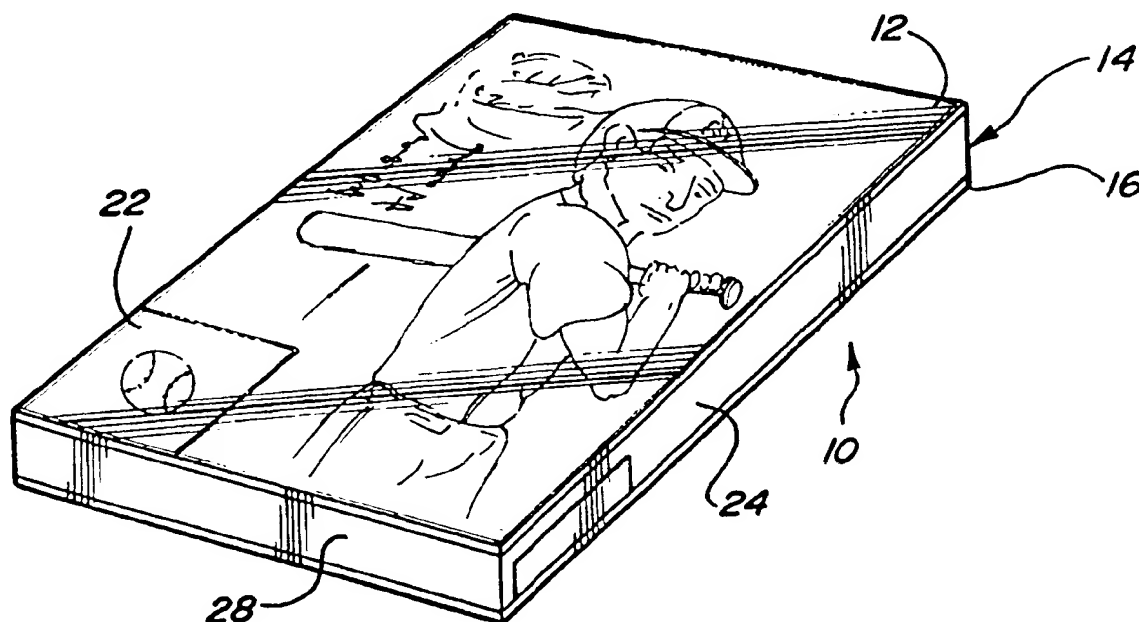
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(21) International Application Number: PCT/US95/08650 (22) International Filing Date: 11 July 1995 (11.07.95) (30) Priority Data: 08/273,715 12 July 1994 (12.07.94) US (71) Applicant: THE THING TANK [US/US]; 31620 Grand River, Farmington, MI 48336 (US). (72) Inventors: PILIPCHUK, William, C.; 2506 John R., Troy, MI 48083 (US). PILIPCHUK, Susan, M.; 2506 John R., Troy, MI 48083 (US). DUQUET, Charles, E.; 31620 Grand River, Farmington, MI 48336 (US). (74) Agents: TAYLOR, W., R., Duke et al.; Harness, Dickey & Pierce, p.l.c., P.O. Box 828, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48303 (US).		(81) Designated States: AM, AT, AU, BB, BG, BR, BY, CA, CH, CN, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, GB, GE, HU, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LK, LR, LT, LU, LV, MD, MG, MN, MW, MX, NO, NZ, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SI, SK, TJ, TT, UA, UZ, VN, European patent (AT, BE, CH, DE, DK, ES, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG), ARIPO patent (KE, MW, SD, SZ, UG).  <b>Published</b> <i>With international search report.</i>	

(54) Title: AUDIBLE TRADING CARD



(57) Abstract

A trading card (10) has a housing (14) and an image displayed on one of the housing surfaces. A switch (22) is on the housing which, when activated, activates a mechanism for storing and playing a recording of an event associated with the image through a speaker (48) in the housing which provides an audible sound recording of an event associated with the image.

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AUDIBLE TRADING CARDBACKGROUND AND SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to trading cards such as baseball, football, basketball or the like and, more particularly, to trading cards which generate an audible highlight of the player depicted on the trading card.

Trading cards and particularly baseball trading cards, date back to the late 1800's when trading cards accompanied tobacco products. Through the years, trading cards have been sold with chewing gum. However, as the number of collectors and the demand has increased, trading cards are separately packaged and sold by themselves. A number of traders and dealers exists which sell individual cards of various players of specific years. Thus, there is a demand for trading cards and also for new ways of promoting them.

Ordinarily, a trading card, being a rectangular paperboard sheet, has a picture of the player on the front and his statistics on the back of the card. Various attempts have been made at altering this format, all with varied success. Different types of holographic or three dimensional cards have been manufactured in the past. Also, attempts have been made to have a card which is passed through a card reading machine which provides audible statistics of the player on the card. However, it appears that trading card enthusiasts and collector returns to the paperboard trading cards. Thus, trading cards have not changed much, other than from engraved printed cards to color photographs cards, over the years.

Due to the stagnant state of the trading card field, which has exhibited little, if any, change over the years, there is a need to stimulate the trading card enthusiast and provide him with more variety. The present invention provides the art with a new trading card. The present invention provides a trading card which emits an audible voice of a career highlight of the depicted player. The present invention enables the user to actively interface with the

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card by pressing a switch so that he can listen to a fantastic moment. While the present invention provides the collector with the usual information, it presents it in a high technology manner.

From the following detailed description taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings and subjoined claims, other objects and advantages of the present invention will become apparent to those skilled in the art.

#### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a trading card in accordance with the present invention.

Figure 2 is an exploded view of the trading card of Figure 1.

#### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Turning to the figures, particularly Figure 1, a trading card is illustrated and designated with the reference numeral 10. The trading card 10 includes a front sheet 12, a housing 14 and a rear sheet 16.

The front sheet 12 may be a film or the like or it may be a paperboard card. The front sheet 12 includes an image such as a photograph of a player 20. Also, if the front sheet 12 is a membrane film, a membrane switch 22 is unitarily formed at a bottom corner of the sheet 12. The switch 22 may be outlined and include an icon representative of the sport of the player shown on the card. Such icons may be a baseball, football, basketball, golf ball or club, or hockey stick or puck. Also, a non-membrane switch, which may be spring loaded or may be of a touch switch type version, may be substituted for the membrane switch.

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The housing 14 has an overall rectangular shape with longitudinal side edges 24, 26 and lateral side edges 28 and 30. The housing includes an internal wall 32 which divides and separates the housing into receiving areas for various components. The housing area 36 houses the battery pack 38. The battery pack 38 is coupled on a pull out tray 39 to enable replacement of the batteries 41. Detentes 43 on the tray 39 or housing hold the tray within grooves 45 of the housing. The housing area 40 houses the portion of the switch 43 which is connected with the circuit board 44. The housing also includes a speaker portion 46 which houses the speaker 48. The speaker 48 includes leads 49 which electrically couple the speaker with the circuit board 44, which in turn is electrically coupled to the switch, which in turn is electrically coupled with the battery pack 38.

The circuit board 44 includes voice synthesized chips which store an audible voice of one or more highlight events associated with the career of the image 20 on the front sheet 12. The switch 43 is activated via pressing the switch 22, which causes the audible voice to be played through the speaker 48.

The rear sheet 16 is secured to the bottom of the housing 14. The rear sheet 16 includes indicia 60 such as statistics or the like of the player's career, thus providing the trading card 10 with the overall appearance of a traditional trading card.

While the above detailed description describes the preferred embodiment of the present invention, the invention is susceptible to modification, variation, and alteration without deviating from the scope and fair meaning of the subjoined claims.

**CLAIMS**

1. An audible trading card comprising:  
a card shaped housing having at least one display surface;  
an image on said display surface;  
a speaker in said housing for providing sound;  
means for storing and playing a recording of an event associated with said image, said means for storing and playing associated with said speaker; and  
means for activating said storage and playing means such that, upon activation, the recording is played and audible sound is heard from the speaker, said activating means on said housing such that said activating means is easily operated by a user.
2. The audible trading card according to claim 1 wherein said storing and playing means includes a battery power source.
3. The audible trading card according to claim 1 wherein said actuating means is a push button on the housing.
4. The audible trading card according to claim 3 wherein said push button is on said display surface of said housing.
5. The audible trading card according to claim 4 wherein said push button is designed to simulate equipment associated with the image's field.

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6. The audible trading card according to claim 5 wherein said push button simulates a baseball or bat, football, basketball, soccer ball, hockey puck or stick, golf ball or club, or the like.

7. The audible trading card according to claim 1 wherein said housing includes a second display surface opposing said first display surface.

8. The audible trading card according to claim 7 wherein said second display surface includes indicia associated with the image's field.

9. The audible trading card according to claim 1 wherein said housing has an overall box shape with two opposing display surfaces and longitudinal and lateral side edges.

10. The audible trading card according to claim 9 wherein said actuating means is on a side edge.

11. The audible trading card according to claim 1 wherein said storing and playing means is positioned within said housing.

12. The audible trading card according to claim 1 wherein said trading card is a self contained unit.

13. The audible trading card according to claim 1 wherein said image is on a membrane and said membrane includes activating means.

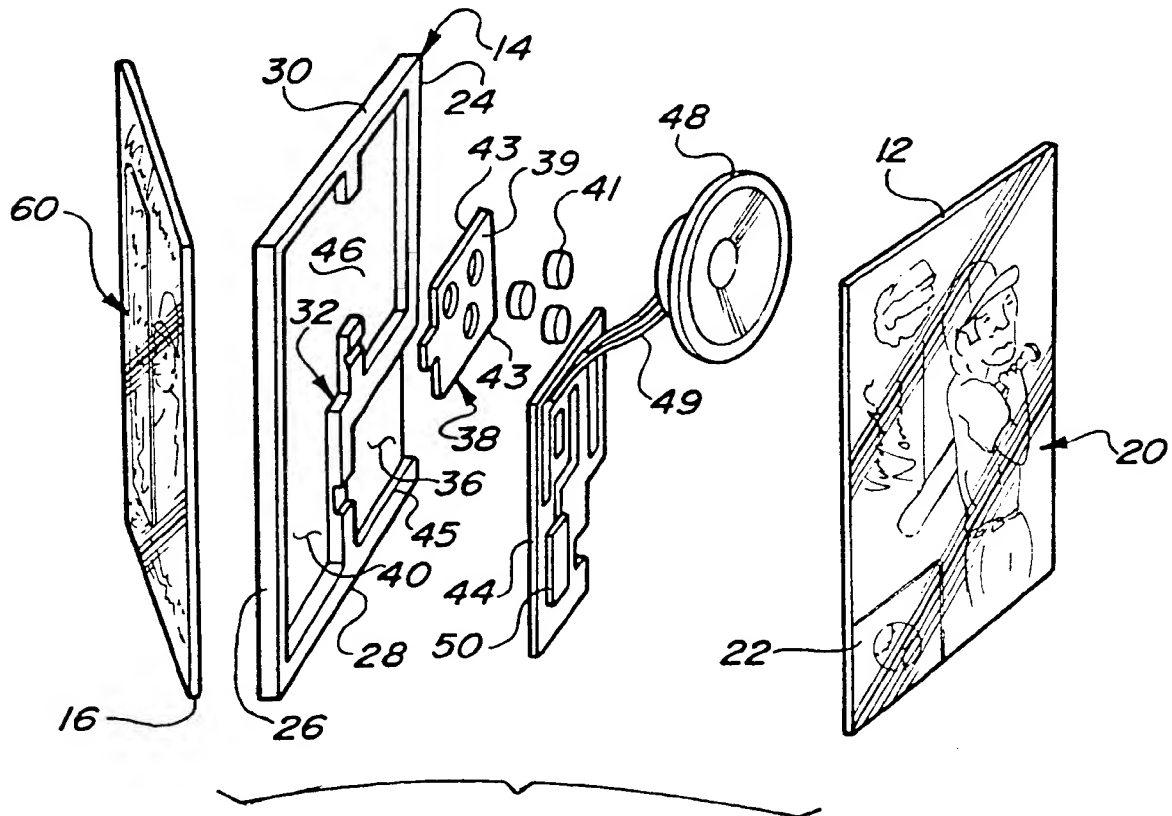
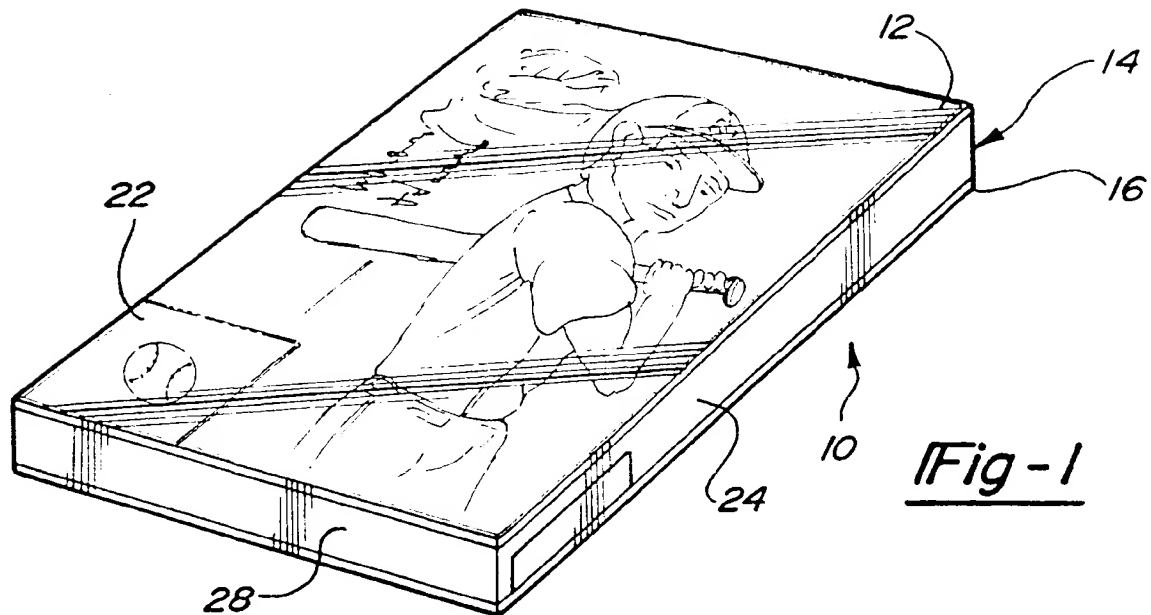
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14. A method of playing a recording associated with a trading card, comprising:  
providing a trading card having means for storing and playing a recording of  
an event, and an activating means coupled with said storing and playing means;  
actuating said activating means such that said storing and playing means  
generates an audible signal which may be heard by the user.

15. The method according to claim 14 and repeatedly actuating said activating  
means to replay said audible signal.



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## INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.  
PCT/US95/08650

## A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC(6) : G09F 1/00, 1/12, 27/00; G11B 31/00

US CL : 40/124.1, 455, 369/63

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

## B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

U.S. : 40/124.1, 455, 152; 369/63, 64, 69, 70

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

## C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X, E	US, A, 5,433,035 (BAUER) 18 July 1995, figure 2	1-15
X, P	US, A, 5,387,108 (CROWELL) 07 February 1995, figures 1-22	1-7, 7, 9, 11-15
X -Y	US, A, 4,791,741 (KONDO) 20 December 1988, figures 2-4	1-3, 7-12, 14, 15  4-6, 13
X -Y	CHIPCODER, Hallmark Greeting Card, Inc., Information Storage Devices, Inc., 1993, see Exhibits A-D	1-3, 7-12, 14, 15  4-6, 13
Y	US, A, 5,063,698 (JOHNSON ET AL.) 12 November 1991, figure 1	4-6, 13

☒ Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.
 ☐ See patent family annex.

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Name and mailing address of the ISA/US Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks Box PCT Washington, D.C. 20231 Facsimile No. (703) 305-3230	Authorized officer JAMES O. HANSEN Telephone No. (703) 308-2168

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C (Continuation). DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
Y	US,A, 4,866,865 (YANG) 19 September 1989, figure 1	1,2
Y	GB,A, 2,155,858 (WANG) 02 October 1985, figure 2	1,2
A	US,A, 4,703,573 (MONTGOMERY ET AL) 03 November 1987, figures 2-3B	13
A	US,A, 4,531,310 (ACSON ET AL) 30 July 1985, figure 4	1
A,P	US,A, 5,365,686 (SCOTT) 22 November 1994, figures 1-6	1



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